

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1-3, 7, 9, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, and 23 have been amended. No new matter has been submitted herein.

Claims 1-23 are pending and under consideration. Reconsideration of the allowability of the claims is respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE CLAIMS 2-3 AND OBJECTION TO CLAIMS 4-6 and 14-16

The Advisory Action mailed December 15, 2004, objected to claims 2-6 and 14-16, while indicating the same include allowable subject matter. In particular, the Advisory Action indicated that Applicant's previous remarks regarding the allowability of claims 2-3 were persuasive.

The outstanding Office Action's rejection of claims 2-3 is believed to be in error.

As noted above, the previous Advisory Action particularly stated that the rejection of claims 2-3, in the Office Action mailed August 24, 2004, had been overcome. However, the outstanding Office Action is merely a copy of the same rejections in a new office action to counter the August 24, 2004, Office Action improperly being made final. Thus, it is believed that by merely copying the same rejections in the outstanding Office Action the Examiner failed to update the rejection to now object to claims 2-3, rather than reject claims 2-3.

It is believed the Examiner meant to object to claims 2-3.

Accordingly, claims 2, 3, 14 and 16 have been amended into independent form, placing claims 2-6 and 14-16 in allowable condition. Withdrawal of the objection and allowance of claims 2-6 and 14-16 is respectfully requested.

In accordance with the Advisory Action and the outstanding Office Action, claims 2-3, 14, and 16 have been amended into independent form, placing dependent claims 4-6 and 15 also in proper condition for allowance.

AMENDMENT TO INDEPENDENT CLAIMS

Independent claims 1, 7, 18, 19, and 23 have been amended to particularly include at least a plurality of differently slanted guides formed to individually adjust the pitches of the vacuum adsorbers, with said vacuum adsorbers each interacting with a respective one of the differently slanted guides, with differing scope and breadth.

These features were previously included in allowable claim 2, and further differentiate the presently claimed invention from the cited references. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 7-13, and 17-23 are in allowable condition.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC 102

Claims 1, 7-13, and 17-23 stand rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Kress, U.S. Patent No. 6,439,631. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As noted previously, the claimed plurality of guides to individually adjust the pitches of the vacuum adsorbers, with the vacuum adsorbers each being provided with interacting with a respective one of the guide slots cannot be interpreted as being disclosed or suggested by Kress.

Neither of the previously interpreted "guide slots" 15 and 16 of Kress are differentially slanted guides to control the pitch.

Further, neither of the interpreted "guide slots" 15 and 16 individually control the pitch.

Rather, because of the particular scissor arrangement in Kress, it is necessary to have at least 4 different beams 15 or 16. Thus Kress does not disclose differentially slanted guides to individually control the pitch.

Therefore, it is respectfully requested that this rejection of claims 1-3, 7-13, and 17-23 be withdrawn and claims 1-3, 7-13, and 17-23 be allowed.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

Serial No. 09/977,199

Docket No.: 1594.1010

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: June 10, 2005

By: 

Stephen T. Boughner
Registration No. 45,317

1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501